
Preschoolers' construction of locutionary acts: Selection of modes and strategies

Titik Sudartinah*

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author; Email: titiksudartinah@uny.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Preschoolers have been able to construct their utterances according to the function they want to achieve. In constructing them, in addition to the functions to be achieved, the modes and strategies used are also taken into consideration. This article examines the selection of modes and strategies of locutionary acts by preschoolers. This study used qualitative and quantitative data in the form of utterances of preschoolers and their frequency of occurrence. A total of 18 preschoolers in one of the preschools in Yogyakarta became participants in this study. The results show that incomplete declarative and literally direct strategy are the main mode and strategy used by the children in their locutionary acts. This implies that the exchange of information through statements and speech literalness are very important for preschoolers, especially in order to increase their understanding of the world around them.

Keywords: preschoolers, locutionary acts, modes, strategies

Konstruksi tindak lokusi tuturan anak usia prasekolah: Pemilihan modus dan strategi

Abstrak

Anak usia prasekolah telah dapat menyusun tuturannya sesuai dengan fungsi yang mereka kehendaki. Dalam penyusunannya, selain fungsi yang hendak dicapai, modus dan strategi yang digunakan dalam bertutur pun turut menjadi pertimbangan. Artikel ini mengupas tentang pemilihan modus dan strategi tindak lokusi sebagai bagian dari penyusunan tuturan yang dilakukan oleh anak usia prasekolah. Penelitian ini menggunakan data kualitatif dan kuantitatif berupa tuturan anak usia prasekolah dan frekuensi kemunculannya. Sebanyak 18 orang anak usia prasekolah di salah satu kelompok bermain di Yogyakarta menjadi partisipan dalam penelitian ini. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa modus berita tidak lengkap dan strategi literal langsung menjadi yang utama digunakan oleh anak-anak tersebut. Hal ini mengindikasikan bahwa pertukaran informasi melalui pernyataan dan keliteralan tuturan merupakan hal yang amat penting bagi anak-anak usia prasekolah, terutama dalam rangka untuk meningkatkan pemahaman mereka terhadap dunia di sekitarnya.

Kata kunci: anak usia prasekolah, tindak tutur, modus, strategi

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INTRODUCTION

The style of language used by preschoolers when speaking tends to show certain characteristics, which can be somewhat different when compared to the style of language of adults. This particularity is mainly due to the theme brought by the children's speech, which is mainly about things related to objects and people who are known and around the children, as well as the activities they routinely do (Ifantidou, 2011; Ninio, 2014). These themes are told by preschoolers in the form of utterances which are quite distinctive in their nature and construction. Meanwhile, in storytelling, short utterances are still widely used. If a long speech is found, it usually has low coherence because it actually comes from several run-on utterances (Fernández, 2011).

However, in fact, preschoolers have been exposed to a fairly structured speech construction, because when talking to them, adults use a language style that has a clear regularity between the language forms and functions aimed at children (Cameron-Faulkner, 2014). This is done with the aim that preschoolers can more easily internalize grammatical rules while they also understand the content of the speech delivered by their interlocutor. Grammar-related knowledge mastered by early childhood is usually related to certain lexicons they master (Traxler, 2012; Uziel-Karl, 2008). This knowledge is very useful, especially when the children construct their real utterances in the form of locutionary acts. The term locutionary acts in pragmatics is defined as “the production of well-formed utterance in a language that one speaks” (Black, 2006:17), which is concerned with the construction of utterances and how disambiguation is achieved through these utterances (Cameron-Faulkner, 2014).

In relation to the construction of locutionary acts by preschoolers, Alwi, Dardjowidjojo, Moeliono, & Lapoliwa (2010) state that syntactically there are 4 types of modes (sentence forms) to choose, namely declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives, and exclamatives. However, exclamatives can actually be formed from declaratives by modifying the Subject and/or Predicate and adding interjections, to express admiration or surprise. Therefore, some scholars classify the modes of locutionary acts based on these three categories of sentence forms, such as Wijana (1996, 2021) and Rett (2011). They also do not categorize exclamatives as a separate mode in the production of locutionary acts, because this type of sentence is a declarative sentence that has representative or expressive illocutionary content and can be said with rising or falling intonation at the end of the utterance.

When viewed from the strategy used to convey preschoolers' intent, a locutionary act can be expressed directly or indirectly, and literally or non-literally. The concept of classifying these types of strategies has been previously proposed by Wijana (1996, 2021), Cutting (2002), Yule (2010), and Kissine (2013). When a direct strategy is chosen, there is a direct relationship between the functions of the utterances and the sentence modes used, for example informing is usually spoken through declaratives, questions are submitted in interrogatives, and imperatives are used to command and request. On the other hand, when an indirect strategy is employed, there is no direct relationship between the function and the sentence mode. For example, a speaker can ask his interlocutor to do something and he does not use an imperative sentence but a declarative or an interrogative one. In addition, the literal and non-literal strategies are related to the constituents of the locutionary structure. A locutionary act is considered to be literal if it can be interpreted according to the words that compose it and is not literal if the meaning it carries does not match the words that compose it (Parker & Riley, 2014; Wijana, 1996, 2021).

Some previous studies have been conducted on preschoolers' utterances. Some focus on how these children acquire and learn their first and second languages, such as those by Harr (2012) and Longobardi et al. (2017). Other scholars highlight the issues related to preschoolers' speech acts, mostly on their illocutionary functions, such as Bernicot & Laval (2006), Aguert et al. (2010), and Pagmar (2016). However, although the locutionary and perlocutionary aspects of preschoolers' speech acts are also important elements in order to provide a complete picture of preschoolers' language, they haven't gained much attention (Aini & Utomo, 2021; Laws, 2019). This is also the case in the context of Indonesian preschoolers, in which illocutionary acts become the main point of discussion in many previous studies, such as by Mukaromah (2008), Stiawati (2012), and Dwijayanti (2019). Therefore, the present study tries to fill in the gap by focusing on the locutionary aspects of preschoolers' utterances, highlighting the choice of modes and strategies.

In investigating preschoolers' locutionary acts, preschool environment in Yogyakarta Special Region is chosen due to the high number of preschoolers attending early childhood education institutions in the region. The data published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology show that ranked third on a national scale, as many as 59.1% of 3-to-6-year-old children in Yogyakarta attended preschools in 2021, with the biggest percentage is from Bantul Regency (73.79%). Therefore, this article reviews the sentence modes used by preschoolers in their locutionary acts, the strategies they use to deliver messages to their interlocutors, namely teachers and peers at preschool environment, as well as the relationship between these modes and strategies and the selection of the two.

METHOD

Research design

This research involves qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data collected were in the form of locutionary acts produced by preschoolers when interacting with their interlocutors in preschool environment. Meanwhile, the quantitative data in this study were in the form of the frequency of occurrence of the qualitative data and its significance. The data sources were conversations between preschoolers and their interlocutors, namely the teacher and peers in the preschool. The selection of preschoolers as research participants was based on age, which was in the age range of 3-6 years. This age range was chosen considering that children aged 3 years have been able to speak quite fluently in interactions with their interlocutors and this is the age range that is most commonly found as participants in preschools. In addition to the age of 3-6 years, the children who participated in this study were Indonesian speakers. A total of 18 preschoolers in one of the preschools in Yogyakarta became participants in this study.

Research instruments

The instruments used in this study consisted of audio/video recordings of conversations between preschoolers and their interlocutors along with their transcripts, field notes, data tables to record data identification/categorization, digital audio/video recording devices, Microsoft Excel 2013 software (to identify locutionary act modes and strategies) and ELAN 5.5. (to compose the transcription of the recording).

Data collection and analysis

The data were collected by recording verbal interactions between preschoolers and their peers and teacher for 6 days, with a duration of 1 hour per day. The recordings were then orthographically transcribed and then checked for accuracy. After that, the utterances in Indonesian were identified and classified based on their modes and strategies. The classification of modes from Rett (2011) and Wijana (2021) and that of strategies by Kissine (2013) were adopted for the analysis of preschoolers' choice of modes and strategies of locutionary acts. When the classification was done, the data were then analyzed in terms of how these modes and strategies were selected and contribute to the construction of preschoolers' locutionary acts.

Furthermore, the frequency of occurrence of each mode and strategy is calculated and its significance is described. The results of the data analysis are presented in narrative form in the form of qualitative descriptions and interpretations supported by percentages and charts to present the results of quantitative data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results show that all types of sentence modes are used by preschoolers, namely declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives. All three appear in complete or incomplete construction. Although these three types of sentences are found in the locutionary acts of the participants in this study, the frequency of occurrence of each type is different. The following figure shows the findings related to the sentence mode used by preschoolers in speaking.

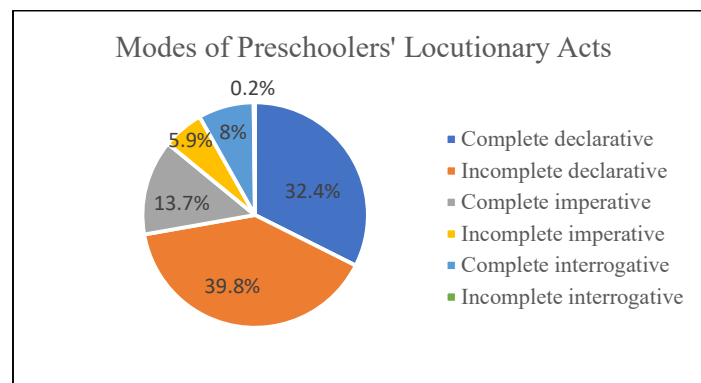


Figure 1. Modes of preschoolers' locutionary acts

Figure 1. clearly shows that out of 1593 utterances, preschoolers' locutionary acts are mainly manifested through declaratives, both incomplete and complete ones. What follows are complete imperatives, complete interrogatives, incomplete imperatives, and incomplete interrogatives. Declaratives are the main modes used by preschoolers to tell stories about various objects, people, activities, and times. Meanwhile, in conveying locutionary acts with various types of sentences as shown in Figure 1., several strategies are used by preschoolers. Some of the strategies used are direct, indirect, literal, and non-literal strategies, as shown in Figure 2.

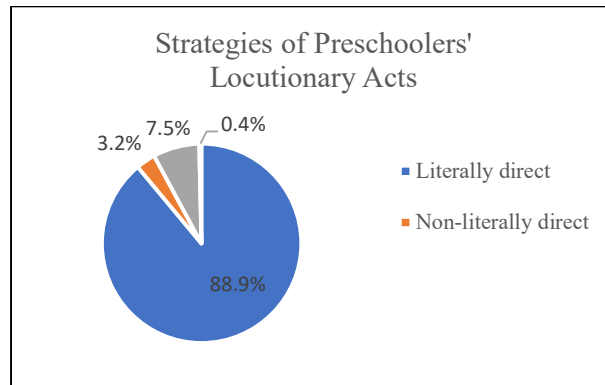


Figure 2. Strategies of preschoolers' locutionary acts

Figure 2. shows that most of preschoolers' locutionary acts use literally direct strategy and the rest is divided into non-literally direct, literally indirect, and non-literally indirect strategies. These findings indicate the possible order of acquisition of the strategies by preschoolers: direct strategies are mastered first than indirect ones, and literal strategies precede non-literal ones. When the combination of locutionary act strategies based on the highest percentage of occurrences in this research data is as follows: literally direct, literally indirect, non-literally direct, and non-literally indirect strategies.

Meanwhile, in constructing their locutionary acts, preschoolers go through several processes, influenced by both the preschoolers' ability to formulate propositions and some external factors such as the interlocutors' scaffolding, grammar mastery, presuppositions between participants, and the situational context in which the utterances will be expressed. The modes of the locutionary acts are selected prior to the strategies, as they consider literalness of their utterances as the most important thing.

Discussion

Modes of preschoolers' locutionary acts

Mode is a form of verb that expresses a psychological atmosphere in connection with actions according to the speaker's interpretation of what he said (Moeljadi et al., 2020). In the context of utterances, therefore, mode is closely related to how sentences are constructed to convey the illocutionary aspects of speech acts produced by a speaker. Therefore, the modes of utterances can be divided into declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives. Each of these modes can also be observed based on the completeness of its elements syntactically, namely complete and incomplete. A sentence is declared as complete if it consists of at least a predicate and a subject, and incomplete if there is no subject and/or predicate so that it is in the form of fragments (Alwi et al., 2010; Moeljadi et al., 2020). Based on the results of the analysis in this study, as shown in Figure 1., it appears that declaratives are the most dominant modes used by preschoolers, followed by imperatives and interrogatives.

Declaratives

As previously mentioned, declaratives used by preschoolers can be in the form of complete and incomplete ones. Although both of them appear very significantly when compared to the other two modes, incomplete declarative mode is the most important. This mode was seen in many locutionary acts of children who were participants in this study, i.e. in 634 out of a total of 1593 utterances (39.8%).

The combination of messages or themes conveyed through the locutionary acts and the functions to be achieved by preschoolers is the main reason underlying the fact that declaratives become the most frequently used by these children in speaking. In terms of the presence of their subject and predicate, it turns out that preschoolers mostly use incomplete syntactic constructions in the form of fragments. The fragments usually contain the Subject or Predicate only.

The omission of one of the sentence elements is quite common in the locutionary acts of preschoolers, which is indicated by the number of incomplete modes found in the data. Ginzburg & Kolliakou (2009) call this kind of incomplete mode as Non-Sentential Utterance (NSU), while Halliday (2004) and Salomo, Lieven, & Tomasello (2013) generally call it a fragment. Although syntactically incomplete, NSU or fragment is actually a semantically complete utterance. NSU can be in the form of a short answer to a question, or an utterance with a declarative mode which is intended to clarify or ask for clarification on statements previously produced by the interlocutors (Ginzburg & Kolliakou, 2009).

NSU is mostly produced by children of preschool age because they assume to have the same presuppositions with their interlocutors, so that conveying complete and explicit information is not really necessary (Gardner & Forrester, 2010; Hickmann, 2004). In addition, this incomplete construction can also be sourced from the limited knowledge related to grammar that is mastered by preschoolers (Halliday, 2004) as well as the pressure and communication difficulties they experience (Stewart & Jackie, 1996).

In the context of this study, it is possible that these three things could be the cause of the large number of NSU produced by the participants. Everything discussed by the participants is set in a school setting (preschool) and the theme is about objects in that location or objects that are familiar to them, so it is possible if they have the same presupposition about the objects being discussed. In addition, the imperfect mastery of aspects related to grammatical rules is also quite obvious, which is marked by the use of inappropriate affixes, for example in the words *dilurus* 'straightened' and *bernakal* 'mischievous', as well as repetition and repair. Meanwhile, there were some participants whose language production was quite lagging behind most of other participants, so they often had difficulty engaging in interactions with their peers and teacher. When this occurs, they tend to fragment the complete proposition that they want to convey, so that what is spoken is an NSU.

The complete declarative mode is the second most widely used mode of preschoolers' locutionary acts, which is 32.4% of the total 1593 utterances. Unlike incomplete ones, which only consist of a subject or predicate, complete declaratives have complete constituents meeting grammatical rules, which contain a subject and a predicate (and can also be added with other elements such as objects and/or adverbs).

Meanwhile, it is interesting to see that there are the particles *yo* 'too' dan *tak* 'I' in Javanese found to be interfering the Indonesian locutionary acts, such as in utterances 1-3 in the following.

A : [to B, showing his drawing]

Rumahku yo tak coret semua. (1)
'I scribble all parts of my house.'

Kamarku tak coret. (2)
'I scribble my room.'

B : *Kamarku tak coret juga.* (3)
'I scribble my room too.'

The influence of Javanese into everyday Indonesian used by preschoolers is clearly visible, including through the use of the two lexicons. This cannot be separated from the abundance of exposure to the Javanese language in the daily life of these children. Moreover, half of the participants in this study also use Javanese as a second language after Indonesian.

One of the causes of this kind of interference, among others, is the mixed use of two languages by adults around children (Almgren & Barreña, 2001; Munandar, 2013), such as by parents and teachers. This causes children not to be able to distinguish and separate the use of words or systems contained in each language they hear. Therefore, they will also tend to follow the behaviour of adults in language, that is by doing code mixing. Besides being influenced by the adults around them, peers who use several languages simultaneously also cause interference in the speech of preschoolers. In fact, these children tend to speak like their peers rather than like their parents (Almgren & Barreña, 2001; Dahl, 2004).

However, Dahl (2004) notes that when following the way of adults or their peers in language, children have the opportunity not to exactly follow it but to make modifications according to their wishes. Therefore, sometimes grammatical errors occur without realizing it due to a negative transfer from the language that is more dominantly used into another language used by these children. If observed carefully, it can be seen that all the complete declaratives used in preschoolers' locutionary acts are simple complete declaratives with one subject and one predicate (1S+1P) as mandatory elements. Several other elements, such as objects, adverbs, or function words are also used, although the intensity of their use is not too much. These additional elements are used to enrich information or provide details of the message conveyed through the utterances of the children. However, when the basic construction of 1S+1P is sufficient to convey the message as intended by the speaker, this construction is still the first choice.

Imperatives

Imperatives are the next locutionary acts modes found in the utterances of preschoolers. The frequency of occurrence is 13.7% of the total 1593 utterances. This mode emphasizes the necessity or prohibition to perform an action as conveyed by the speaker (Rakoczy & Tomasello, 2009). By the time they are around three years old, preschoolers have already begun to master imperative mode similar to that used by adults (Owens, 2012), although the mode is more aimed at peers than adults (Nakamura, 2001). If produced orally, the imperative mode has a different intonation than the declarative one. When written, it usually ends with an exclamation mark (!) or a period (.).

In addition, in terms of their syntactic structure, imperative sentences are often inverted sentences where the predicate precedes the subject, or even the subject is omitted. Therefore, the most important element in an imperative mode is the predicate, so that when it already contains a predicate, whether accompanied by a subject (or other elements) or not, the sentence can be viewed as a complete imperative (Alwi dkk., 2010; Suhardi, 2008; Tomasello, 2011). This definition is used in this study; complete and incomplete imperatives are identified based on the presence and absence of the Predicate (Verb).

Some examples of utterances that use the imperative sentence mode are as in the following conversation.

A : *Bikin kereta ya!* (4)

'Let's make a train!'

B : *Keretanya nggak lepas!* (5)

'A long one!'

A : *Keretanya nggak lepas, sampai wastafel ya!* (6)

'A long one, to the sink!'

From these three utterances, it appears that there is an increase in the sentence structure used to give orders or requests. Utterance 4 is a complete imperative which only contains a predicate without a subject. The omission of the subject is indeed a common thing in the construction of imperatives because the subject in question is usually the interlocutor. Meanwhile, in utterances 5 and 6, there is the addition of new information about how the train should be formed and description of the place. This fact shows that preschoolers have been able to expand the basic sentence form into a more detailed one, by adding new information that is deemed necessary in one part of the basic sentence.

The extent to which sentence expansion can be carried out by preschoolers has been the topic of several previous studies, such as that conducted by Menyuk & Brisk (2005) and Heine (2009). Menyuk & Brisk (2005) mention that in addition to modifications in the form of omitting certain parts of their speech, preschoolers can also lengthen their speech by adding certain necessary information. In addition, Heine (2009) states that this lengthening process can be conducted in two ways, i.e. through integration and expansion. The first term refers to the joining of two single sentences by children so that the complexity of the sentence increases, although often the combination does not follow the applicable grammatical rules and the result is a run-on sentence. Although there are not many to occur, run-on sentences are also found in this study. The second term, expansion, is used to name the expansion of a sentence which is done by expanding one part of a single sentence by making a subordinate clause. This second method is used by A and B in utterances 4-6.

Although occurring not as frequent as complete imperatives, incomplete imperatives also colour the locutionary acts produced by preschoolers. There are a third of all imperatives (5.9%) that use this incomplete structure. This incompleteness is observed through suprasegmental elements, but without the presence of Verbs which are the main elements in imperatives. Therefore, in categorizing such utterances, what the researcher can do is to observe the suprasegmental elements (intonation), gestures, and the context that surrounds the speech.

Interrogatives

The next mode used by preschoolers when speaking is the complete interrogative mode, which is 8% of the total utterances produced by these children. An interrogative sentence is a sentence intended to obtain an answer, which is usually formed by using question words such as what, who, and how, and in Indonesian it is often marked by the use of the bound form *-kah* and in writing ended with a question mark (?) or orally with an increasing intonation (Alwi et al., 2010; Setyadi, 2018; Wijana, 2016). Similar to declarative and imperative sentences, complete interrogative sentences consist of at least a subject and a predicate, which can be replaced with the appropriate question words. If no question word is used, the interrogative sentence can be detected through the intonation used at the end of the sentence (Pandean, 2018).

Two types of interrogative sentences are used by preschoolers, namely confirmative and informative interrogatives. In utterance 7 *Aku jadi kakaknya to?* 'I am the big brother, aren't I?', the speaker wants to confirm the role he had to play in pretend play. He tried to confirm who played the big brother. The question particle *to* in Javanese is used to indicate that the utterance is in the mode of a confirmative interrogative. In addition to these two particles, the bound forms *-kah*, *apa*, and *kan* are also commonly used to mark confirmative interrogative sentences (Pandean, 2018).

Meanwhile, the informative interrogative sentence mode is intended to ask for information from the interlocutor. The information he wants is shown through the use of question words what and which, which are the two main question words commonly used in Indonesian (Alwi et al., 2010). From these two question words, several other question words that are commonly used in informative interrogative sentences can be derived, such as who, why, how much, where, where, and how.

Some locutionary acts with interrogative mode produced by preschoolers have incomplete structures, mainly due to the absence of the predicate (and or subject). However, the frequency of occurrence is not high, which is only 0.2% of the total utterances. Like the complete interrogative sentence mode, the incomplete interrogative also consists of informative and confirmative interrogative sentences. However, to identify the types of interrogative sentences used by speakers, it is necessary to carefully observe the context of the situation when the speech is produced.

From various examples of utterances that use declarative, imperative, and interrogative modes, both with complete and incomplete structures, it can be observed that the declarative mode is the most used by preschoolers. This mode was chosen because it is the most appropriate and simplest for storytelling, considering that this is the most common activity done by preschoolers when interacting with their teachers and peers.

Meanwhile, when observed based on its structure, the incomplete mode far exceeds the complete mode in terms of the frequency of occurrence in the data. In general, the use of this incomplete mode implies several things, including the limited grammar system mastered by these preschoolers. In addition, this is also related to the presence of the same presupposition between the speaker and his interlocutors, so that not all complete information needs to be made explicit by the speaker. Ellipsis or the omission of the main part of the sentence, namely the predicate, is one that marks the similarity of this presupposition. The incomplete mode is also influenced by the scaffolding given by peers as preschoolers' interlocutors. If these directions appear in interactions with peers, then the response given will be in the form of an incomplete structured response, because on average the form is in the form of a short answer to the directions given by the interlocutors. In summary, the relationship among these four things can be illustrated as follows.

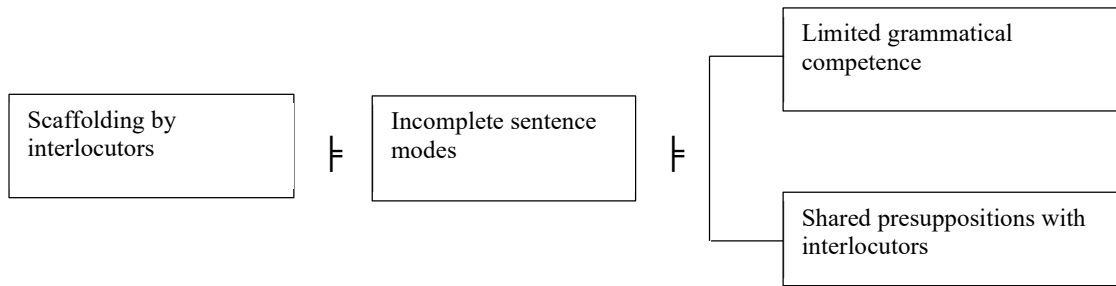


Figure 3. Entailment of the use of incomplete sentences in preschoolers' locutionary acts

Strategies of preschoolers' locutionary acts

In addition to using certain modes, preschoolers also use certain strategies in constructing their locutionary acts. These strategies, as proposed by Parker & Riley (2014), consists of two types, namely explicit (using performative verbs) and non-explicit strategies (not using performative verbs, although the message conveyed may be the same). Based on the analysis of the words used by the research participants, performative verbs are very rarely used by these children, so the category of explicit locutionary acts is not discussed in this study. Therefore, non-explicit strategy are the main strategy discussed in this study. Parker & Riley (2014) add that non-explicit strategy can be in the form of direct or indirect strategies. The concept of which is similar to that stated by Cutting (2002), Yule (2010), dan Kissine (2013), that is related to whether there is a direct relationship between the act produced and the structural mode used in the utterance.

Meanwhile, observing the meaning of the words that compose a locutionary act, literal and non-literal strategies can be identified. If the meaning carried by an utterance is in accordance with the combination of the meanings of the constituents, then the strategy used is a literal strategy. On the other hand, if the meaning of a locutionary act cannot be observed directly based on the meaning of its constituents, then the non-literal strategy is used. (Parker & Riley, 2014; Wijana, 1996). Therefore, in this study, the analysis related to the strategies used by preschoolers in their locutionary acts can be classified into literally direct, non-literally direct, literally indirect, and non-literally indirect strategies.

Based on the findings related to the strategies used by preschoolers in their utterances as presented in Figure 2., it appears that most of the locutionary acts produced by preschoolers use a literally direct strategy (88.9%). The rest consists of non-literally direct (3.2%), literally indirect (7.5%) and non-literally indirect strategies (0.4%). These findings indicate the possible order of acquisition of strategies that are mastered by preschoolers: that direct strategies are mastered before indirect strategies, and literal strategies before non-literal strategies.

Literally direct strategy

Referring to the frequency of its occurrence which is very dominant (88.9%), the literally direct strategy is the main strategy used by preschoolers. Using this strategy, the children compose their locutionary acts with words that can be interpreted literally with basic functions according to the type of sentence used: declarative to tell stories, imperatives to order or ask, and interrogatives to ask questions. An example of the use of a literally direct strategy is shown in the following conversation.

[children playing with plasticine]

- A : *Ini pura-pura tempat nggoreng to?* (8)
 'This pretends to be something to fry, right?'
Leon, terus ditutup. (9)
 'Leon, cover it.'
- Teacher : [showing a picture] *Leon, bikin ini. Bikin apa itu?*
 'Leon, make this. What are you making?'
- B : [to A] *Ayo.* (10)
 'Let's do it.'
- Teacher : *Bikin apa?*
 'What are you making?'
- A : *Pizza.* (11)

All preschoolers' locutionary acts in the conversation are literally direct, which can be understood based on the denotative meaning brought by each utterance. Various locutionary acts produced by preschoolers in this conversation show that they have been able to involve themselves nicely in the conversation. This can be evidenced by the unity of the theme discussed with other participants, as well as the flow of the turn of speech which runs quite smoothly which is marked by the appearance of suitable adjacency pairs.

In general, adjacency pairs can be a marker of sequences of speech that are common in a conversation. Especially in conversations between preschoolers and teachers, the form of adjacency pair of question and answer is the most common type. In the conversation, this form appears through the teacher's question *Bikin apa?* 'What are you making?' which A answers with the word Pizza (11). As stated by Ehrlich & Freed (2010) and Gardner (2013), in an institutional context, the main form of interaction is usually in the form of question and answer, which is also a means of marking the change of speech turns (Dalgren, 2017; Gillen, 2003).

Literally indirect strategy

The second type of locutionary act strategy used by preschoolers is the literally indirect strategy. This type of strategy ranks second, after literally direct strategy, although the frequency is only 7.5% of 1593 utterances. This indicates that this strategy is not the first to be mastered by children, but at preschool age, this type of strategy has begun to be widely used. A locutionary act is called using an indirect strategy if the mode used is not in line with the intent to be conveyed by the speaker. For example, someone uses declaratives not to inform but to order or ask for confirmation. Some examples of the use of literally indirect strategies are presented in the following conversation, in utterances 12 and 13.

[outdoor learning activities: children are practicing pouring water into bottles]

A : *Basah, kamu nggak basah to?* (12)

'Wet, you're not wet, aren't you?'

B : *Aku cuci tangan.*

'I wash my hands.'

C : [pointing to a dipper] *Bu guru, aku boleh pakai ini nggak?* (13)

'Ma'am, can I use this?'

This conversation took place when the children were doing activities in front of the class. At that time they were learning how to pour water into a bottle through a funnel placed in the mouth of the bottle. In the middle of the activity, A asked B about his condition (12). The question was actually not meant as a medium to ask for information like a question, but rather to convince him that B's shirt wasn't as wet as he thought it would be. The particle *to* in Javanese is usually used as a marker that the sentence only serves to confirm, and not to ask for information.

In addition to utterance 12, utterance 13 also uses a literally indirect strategy. This act is a directive act intended by C as a request for permission to his teacher to be allowed to use a small dipper that is nearby to pour water into his bottle. Even though it is a request which is classified as a directive act, the formal structure of the utterance is in the form of an interrogative sentence, not an imperative. Therefore, this locutionary act uses an indirect strategy.

Non-literally direct strategy

From the overall data on the strategies used by preschoolers in speaking, the non-literally direct strategy has very little frequency, which is only 3.2% of 1593 utterances. The frequency which is very far below the literally direct strategy indicates that preschoolers are not yet sufficiently able (or willing) to use non-literal strategies when speaking. In the context of preschoolers' locutionary acts, the non-literal strategies used are not the same as those used by adults in their speech. When adults use non-literal strategies in their locutionary acts, they use words that are connotative or associated with certain things that cannot be interpreted directly through the most basic meaning carried by each of these words. Meanwhile, in preschoolers' locutionary acts, this is not found. What makes the children's speech uses non-literal strategy is that they use words that are not found in standard Indonesia dictionary, but are

commonly used in everyday conversation and function like an interjection, which is used to express surprise or just imitate certain sounds, for example:

A : [calling B] B!

B : *Ha?* (14)

‘What?’

A : *Tak pinjam HP-nya!*

‘Lend me your phone!’

In this conversation, the non-literally direct strategy is shown through utterance 14. At that time B was called by A and he answered *Ha?* ‘What?’. In Indonesian, the word *ha* is commonly used as an exclamation to express joy, ridicule, relief, or surprise. However, in this context, B's response is intended as a confirmatory question to A so that he can provide further explanation as to why he called B. Therefore, it can be said that the strategy used by B in responding to A's utterance is a direct strategy (because the interrogative is used to ask a question) and is not literal (because it cannot be interpreted literally without observing the context).

Non-literally indirect strategy

The last type of locutionary act strategy found in preschoolers' utterances is a non-literally indirect strategy. This type of strategy is the one with the lowest frequency in this study, which is only 0.4% of the total 1593 utterances. A non-literally indirect strategy is a strategy by which the speaker does not use conventional sentence structures according to the illocutionary meaning to be conveyed. In addition, any locutionary acts using this strategy cannot be interpreted in a straightforward manner according to the denotative meaning of each of the constituents. Careful observation is needed of the context of the situation in which the act is used so that the intent can be understood.

The very low frequency of occurrence of this strategy in preschoolers' utterances may signal that this type of strategy is not liked or has not been mastered by these children. Children do not use this type of strategy as one of their main strategies in locutionary act probably due to its complexity. According to Cameron-Faulkner (2014), who is supported by Hoyte et al (2014), many things need to be considered prior to the use of a non-literally indirect strategy, and as such, this type of strategy is used the least, by both adults and children. Even if it appears in preschoolers' locutionary acts, what appears is not what is found in the locutionary acts of adults who use a similar strategy. An example of the use of this strategy is in utterance 15 in the following conversation.

[children playing some traditional music instruments]

A : *Kamu di sini!*

‘You, here!’

E e e. (15)

B : [seeing A pulling C's hands] *Kasihlan lho.*

‘It's a pity.’

In Indonesian, the interjection *e* is usually used to attract attention, remind, or call (Moeljadi et al., 2020). In the context of utterance 15, the word is not only intended to attract the attention of the interlocutor, but also contains an order for B to occupy a certain sitting position that has been determined by A. The indirect strategy in this speech is indicated by the sentence mode used. Instead of using an imperative, A uses a declarative intonation. Furthermore, a non-literal strategy is characterized by meaning that must be extracted from knowledge of the context in which and when the speech is produced. This example of non-literally direct utterance shows that preschoolers use this strategy by utilizing exclamations, but they use it as the main (or only) part of their utterance. The utterance also contains an illocutionary meaning which is not expressed in the form of words, but implicitly contributes to the meaning of the utterance.

The selection of modes and strategies of locutionary acts by preschoolers

Examining the relationship between the modes and strategies used by preschoolers in their locutionary acts, one can see that there are certain patterns that are quite regular regarding the use of these two things. This relationship can be illustrated in Figure 4.

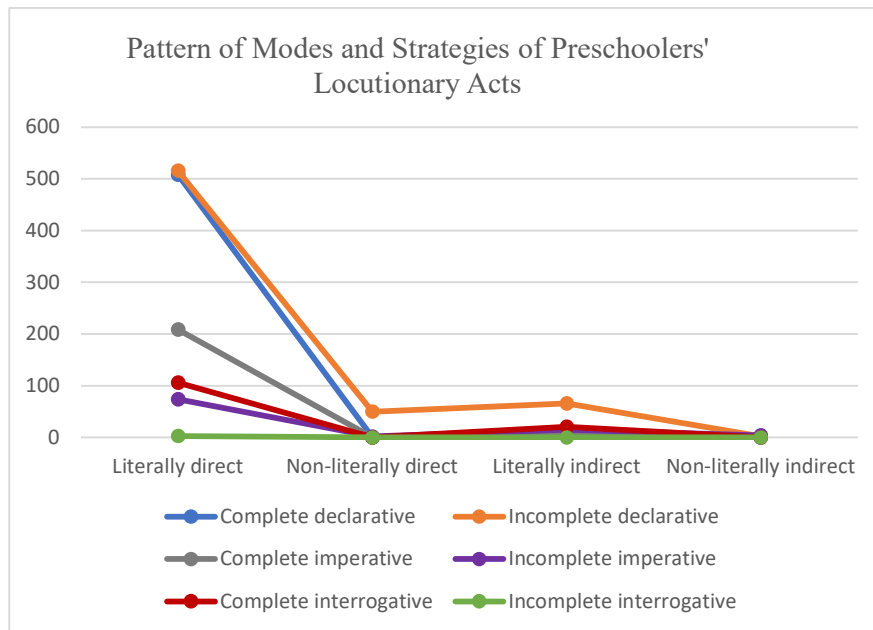


Figure 4. Pattern of modes and strategies of preschoolers' locutionary acts

Figure 4. shows that each mode used by preschoolers in their locutionary acts contains all kinds of strategies. The main mode used is incomplete declarative, which is followed by complete declarative, complete imperative, complete interrogative, incomplete imperative, and incomplete interrogative. Meanwhile, related to locutionary act strategies, literally direct strategy is the main strategy used by these children.

The dominance of the incomplete declarative mode and literally direct strategy indicate that these modes and strategies are the easiest to learn and use by children. This is in line with what was stated by Cameron-Faulkner (2014), that children master direct strategy before indirect one. The more complex the relationship between the formal structure of locutionary acts and their functions and the need for higher inferential skills on the part of the interlocutors make indirect strategies more complicated to learn.

The pattern of the relationship between the modes and strategies used by preschoolers as presented in Figure 4. shows some kind of regularity, i.e. that the literally direct strategy is the most dominant in each mode. Meanwhile, the literally indirect strategy is more widely used than the non-literally direct strategy. This indicates that preschoolers prioritize the literalness of their locutionary acts rather than whether or not the mode used is direct.

Before they can realize their utterances, preschoolers must go through several processes in constructing them, including those related to the selection of modes and strategies. Several external aspects also influence how a locutionary act is realized by preschoolers, including the scaffolding provided by the interlocutors, their mastery of grammar, presuppositions between participants, and the situational context in which the act will be realized. In summary, the following chart shows these processes.

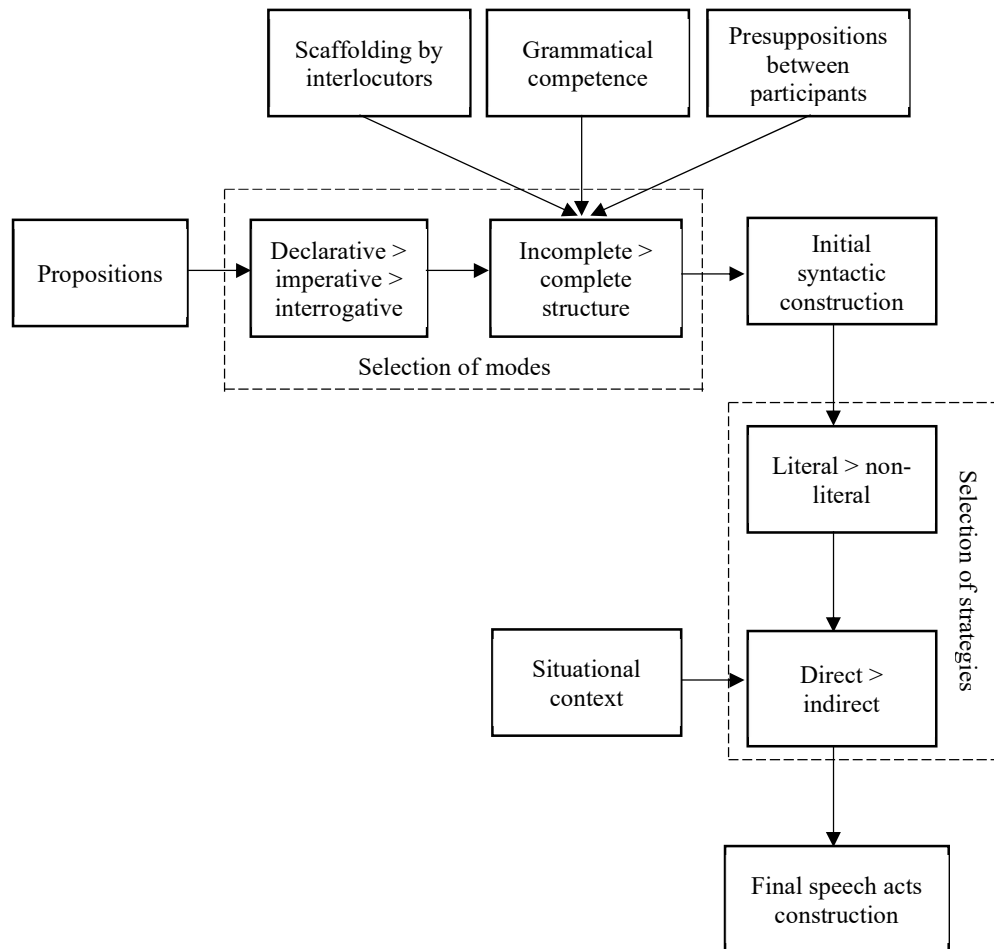


Figure 5. Selection of modes and strategies in preschoolers' locutionary acts

Figure 5. shows the steps taken by preschoolers in constructing their locutionary acts. The proposition of the message to be conveyed is the most basic thing in the preparation of an utterance. To be able to make the proposition sound, the proposition needs to be packaged with the right grammatical construction so that the meaning can be conveyed to the interlocutors in accordance with what the speaker wants. In this case, preschoolers will consider various things contained in the scaffolding provided by their interlocutors, both adults (teachers) and their peers in the preschool setting.

In addition, the initial syntactic arrangement which contains the planned formal structure is also quite influenced by preschoolers' grammatical competence and the presuppositions that the speaker and his interlocutors already have. Only then does the preschooler think about the strategy to be used. The easiest to use is of course the literally direct strategy, which in fact dominates in this study. In choosing a strategy, even with their limited grammatical abilities, preschoolers have been able to adapt it to the context of the situation in which the utterance will be spoken, for example in relation to who the interlocutor is. This awareness, especially related to social distance and power possessed by the interlocutor, is even said to have been understood by children at the age of about 4 years (Bryant, 2009; Hoyte et al., 2014).

CONCLUSIONS

An utterance is of course produced by considering various aspects, for example to whom it is addressed or when it is said. Therefore, certain modes and strategies were chosen to be used. The same is true for utterances produced by preschoolers. First, in terms of the mode used, it appears that the incomplete declarative mode is the most commonly used. Only then followed by the imperative sentence mode and interrogative sentence. The incompleteness of the mode chosen by the children mainly stems

from the scaffolding provided by their interlocutors, so that the alternative responses given are quite limited, or indeed originate from things that are internal in the children, such as the limited grammatical competence and the assumption that they have similar presuppositions with their interlocutors so that some information is deemed unnecessary to be conveyed explicitly through their speech.

In addition, in terms of their strategies, preschoolers view that the literalness of their utterances is the most important thing to consider, while whether or not the direct strategy used is in the next order. This has the consequence that almost all locutionary acts produced by preschoolers are straightforward, as they are, and do not cause potential ambiguity on the part of their interlocutors, both teachers and their peers in the preschool setting.

Meanwhile, the modes and strategies of their locutionary acts are carefully selected by preschoolers through several steps, each of which contributes as parts of the effort to achieve the goals of their utterances. These processes signal the awareness of these children regarding the background of their interlocutors and their understanding of the world around them.

Interesting findings regarding the modes and strategies of preschoolers' locutionary acts in this study add new insights to the study of preschoolers' language as they reveal that there is a certain order of acquisition in relation to these two things. However, as this study was conducted on limited participants and setting, it is suggested that future researchers conduct studies involving more participants in a larger setting so that more comprehensive and complete picture of preschoolers' language can be generated.

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